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ART HISTORY

IN THE

HIGH SCHOOL.

PERROT

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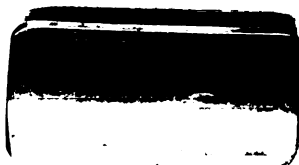
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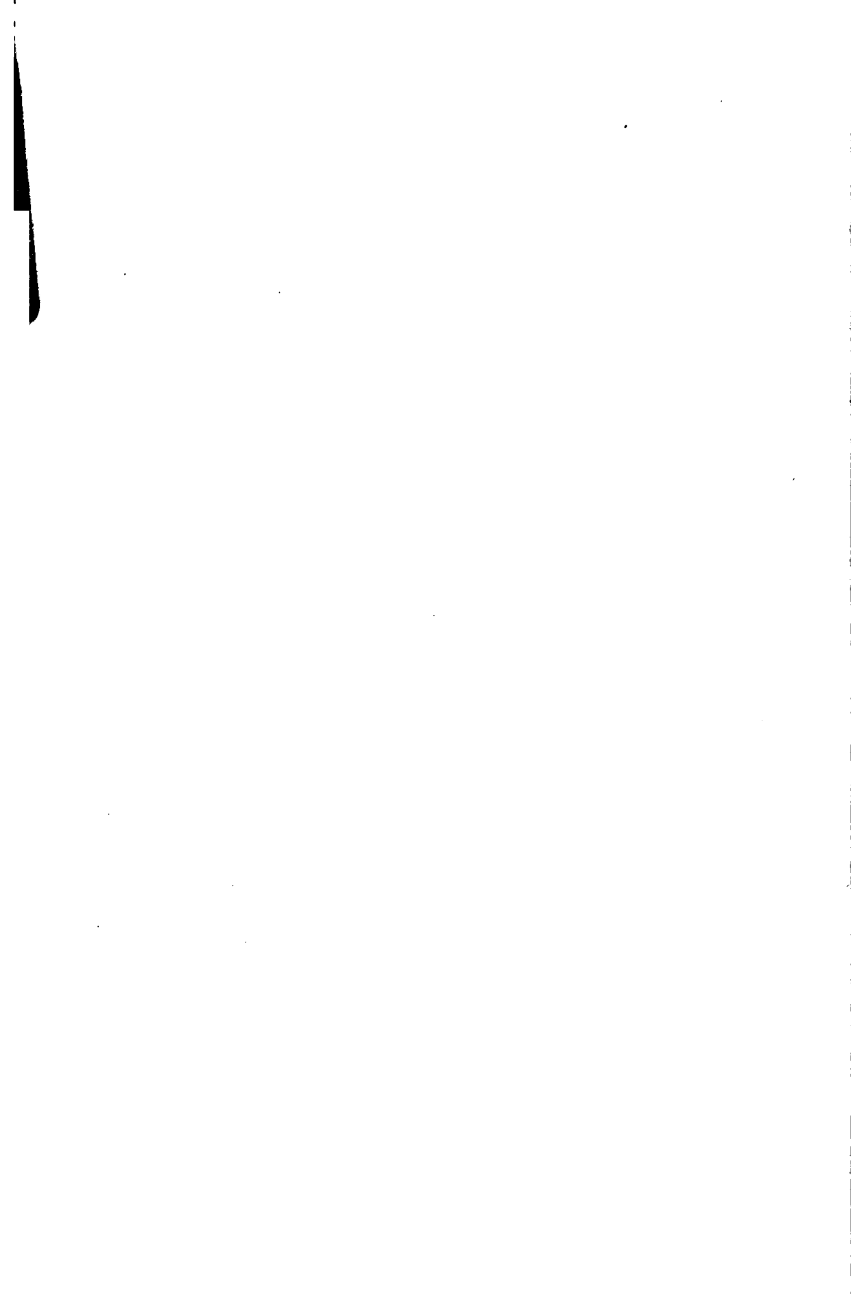
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ART HISTORY
IN THE
HIGH SCHOOL

BY
GEORGE PERROT

TRANSLATED FROM THE REVUE DES DEUX MONDES

BY
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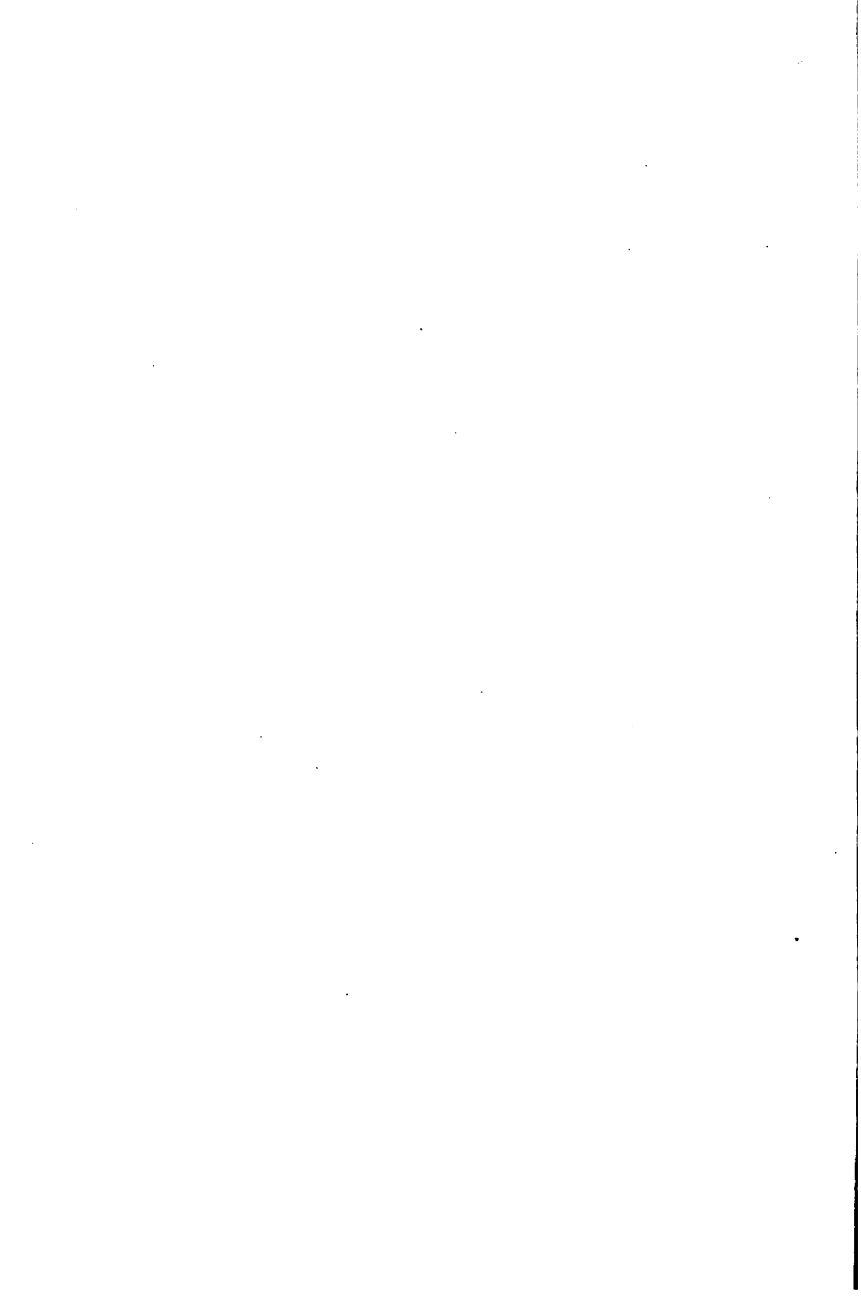
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ART HISTORY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

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Art History in the High School

An article in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of July 15, 1899, on this subject is worthy of attention. It is by M. George Perrot, founder of the chair of Classical Archaeology in the French Academy and, with his collaborator Chas. Chipiez, author of the well-known volumes on *Ancient Art*.

In 1891 M. Perrot submitted to the school authorities of France a scheme, forthwith adopted and put into operation, by which as a compensation for the withdrawal of Greek and Latin from a section of the curriculum, three hours weekly were to be divided between the history of civilization and the history of art. This applied only to the division called the First Modern and not to students preparing for a University course. The experiment has covered eight years and in spite of many draw-backs,

has been of such value that M. Perrot insists, in justice to students of the so-called Classical Course, that it be extended to them; that these lads destined for liberal careers and with years of training before them, should not be condemned to a manifest inferiority and alone in their generation be strangers to a whole order of sentiments and ideas now becoming familiar to their more favored comrades. For the first time in its history the Lycée now teaches its pupils that the art of a people, in the same sense as its literature, is the vehicle of its profoundest feeling and highest thought, and their attention is being directed to masterpieces of sculpture, painting, and building.

The hour seems to have arrived when arguments should be presented in favor of making Art History as much a required study in the classical course as since 1891 it has been in the general course of Modern Instruction; though the extension should be made only under condition that illustrative material shall supplement instruction from the chair.

The importance of including art history in any scheme of education is strongly urged. The language of form interprets intellectual conceptions and sentiments of the heart with a clearness and force equal to any expression by written or spoken word. The literature and history of former generations give us only a partial knowledge of any state of society which may be our study. There are soul traits, soul conditions and characteristics unrecorded by poet or historian, though perhaps hinted at, which will forever elude the grasp of those who depend only upon written evidence. These conditions of soul, however elementary and remote, leave their sure mark on the habitudes and beliefs of a people; and though unexplained by the contemporary civilization are often made clear by the work of the artist and builder.

One out of many examples is furnished by Schliemann's discoveries, which have unearthed Troy, Mycenæ, and Tiryns; have recovered from oblivion a primitive Greece of which the Greeks themselves had preserved only a slight recollection.

tion, and have given to the Homeric epoch a background of several centuries. Now this Greece, contemporary with the times of Tothmes and Rameses and anterior to Grecian history and even legend, did not know the art of writing; but she did know how to quarry and dress stone, how to square wood and make it into framework, how to model and bake clay, to melt and hammer lead, bronze, gold and silver, how to carve ivory. Every small scrap fashioned by the tools of these artisans has the value of an authentic document. After what fashion society was then constructed, what sort of lives men led, how they understood the to-morrow of death, all this is revealed by marks which the hand of man has left upon objects it has touched—the colossal walls of Tiryns, the majestic mortuary domes of Mycene, the space arrangement of the royal dwellings whose plans are traceable upon the ground, and those of sepulchres hidden under the earth, as well as the arms, instruments, vases, and jewels found scattered through the rubbish of edifices, or

buried in the tombs. Thanks to these monuments the shadowy past is illuminated with vivid gleams of light, and we begin to distinguish the traits which characterized this world of Achæan heroes, a world whose image, transformed and singularly magnified, is reflected in the Iliad and Odyssey, as that of Charlemagne and his Knights in our ancient heroic poems..

From these obscure times let us transport ourselves to the Greece of Pisistratus, of Pericles and Alexander. Our students know what literary losses we have suffered here, what a mere fragment has escaped the general shipwreck of antiquity; should not some hint also be given them of the precious supplementary information which to some extent has come to fill up these gaps? There are many variations on important myths which have furnished the contemporary artist, especially the ceramic artist, with subjects, and thus have acquainted us with episodes and personages scarcely noticed by writers of the day. We ought to have the cyclic poets—they have all perished; we ought to have the

lyric poets of whom Pindar has rescued a single one through that ode to Bacchus which is the joy of Hellenists; we ought to have a whole lost tragic literature and a whole comic literature represented only by Aristophanes; we should have the Old, the Middle and the New Comedy, with that Menander who since the Renaissance has been the eternal regret of the discriminating; but all this poetry, whether lost or preserved, did not exhaust the prodigious wealth of Greek imagination which produced as much in other channels.

If by an evil chance Greek sculpture had also perished we should be condemned to eternal ignorance of certain racial aspects and modes of thought. Is anything in literature of equal value with the Tanagra figurines for revealing to us how Greece felt and enjoyed womanly beauty? Not only its serious and noble types, a Pallas or an Aphrodite, but the courtesan, the city dame, the work-woman of some little town whose grace in the abandonment of every-day life is observed and seized. Were we to judge the

religion of Greece simply by epithets which define the gods and by the actions which poets attribute to them we should risk a total misconception. We do not possess, alas! those master-works of Phidias which render men, the ancients tell us, more religious, the Athene Parthenos of the Acropolis and the Zeus of Olympia; but even from reproductions which have reached us one may divine the master's embodiment of luminous intelligence and of sovereign power in benevolent repose.

It is to be regretted that our students do not visit more frequently the galleries of the Louvre; I have seen more than one high school boy there, but ordinarily these visitors are impatient to reach the picture galleries of the second floor, hastening by the sculpture on the first—the work of the ancients. As I have watched them glancing about with an indifferent eye how I have wished they would linger and lend an ear. If one has learned to listen, these statues ranged against the walls,—the Mars which bears, it is believed, the mark of Polyclete, the Diana of

the Chase, the Victory of Samothrace, the divine Venus of Melos, may speak and in some such words as these: "Young man, you are studying Greece in Homer and in Plato, in Sophocles and in Herodotus; do not pass us by so quickly; we are also of this Greece. You need neither grammar nor dictionary to understand and to love us. You need to educate your eyes. You need to learn point by point the refinements of beauty. Do not fear to waste your time, especially if you aspire later to become an authorized interpreter of Greek works of genius. The day when by long and affectionate intercourse your acquaintance with us shall have ripened into an intimacy so close that at any moment you are able to summon our images before your memory, clearly seen as if our forms themselves were present, from that day as you read the poets your thoughts will be occupied by the same images which rose at the hearing of their verses to the mental vision of our contemporaries, the Greeks who saw us created; and the simple effect of experiencing like impressions will bring you

near to the ancient Greeks; you will be in their nearer neighborhood and more able to think and feel after their fashion than can the most subtle grammarian, the most deeply lored Hellenist who has never seen and closely studied us.²

In the neighboring gallery where the Roman emperors hold sway, their portrait statues speak as clear a word. Can lecture or book bring back to life as do these statues the Rome of the Cæsars? In this series of portraits embracing three centuries of history, the times and the men are more clearly revealed than through either the narratives of ancient authors or the dissertations of modern savans. Augustus and Tiberius, Constantine and Theodosius had the same title, Emperor; they were all of them called Consuls, Cæsars, Augustus, fathers of their country, etc. Nevertheless the character of imperial power passed through a profound modification between the first and the fourth centuries. Volumes which have been written to explain this change are not so eloquent as the simple comparison of these princes as to their personal appearance.

Augustus, in perhaps the most beautiful of his statues, called the *Prima Porta*, has head, arms, legs and feet bare; a cuirass covers the short garment of a soldier and a military mantle is thrown over that. The emperor is a war chief who harangues his troops. In another statue he is draped in the toga like a simple citizen and holds in his hand a roll containing the discourse he is to read the senate. These are the manners, costumes, and decorations of republican Rome. One perceives nevertheless vividly portrayed the spirit and false principle of this ill-defined régime which, while investing one man with almost boundless power, kept up during two centuries an affectation of conserving the forms of ancient liberty.

On the other hand, examine the image of some successor of Diocletian; let it be one of the emperors who resided by preference at the new capitol, Constantinople, but do not seek him among those statues of pomp where the sculptor, through routine, follows a classical expression; question monuments of another kind where

the artist holds closer to reality—the illuminated manuscript, the mosaics, the ivory diptychs. There you will no longer see the simple and noble type borrowed from Greece by Rome, but a form which by certain characteristics recalls the old art of Asia, and by others announces that of the Middle Ages. The head is encircled with a diadem, the body and limbs are entirely concealed by tight draperies which are at the same time very long and very scanty; the stuffs which form this casing are from top to bottom rich with embroideries of various designs representing rose-work and flowers, animals and personages. There can be no mistake, we are no longer in Rome; the fiction so long kept up has finally vanished; the empire has turned into an Oriental monarchy.

Between the two extremes how many fine gradations may be pointed out to the pupil, the best possible commentary on history. The heads of the earlier Cæsars, even that of Claudius, the spoiled scholar, the book-worm led astray to a throne, and that of Caligula, that witty and

wicked fool, have all of them something aristocratic, a nobility and proud strength in which one feels the stock; one recognizes descendants of those great patrician families which at first alone seemed capable of giving masters to Rome. With Vespasian, whose family, belonging to the small burgher class, had pushed its way up to an official position of the second order, the advent of new imperial blood is perceived. Vespasian has a round unbearded visage and the double chin of a chief of department. Trajan has the physiognomy of a soldier, one is tempted to say of a soldier who has carried his knapsack and passed through the inferior grades of service. Hadrian, with his head bent the better to hear, his eyes of a vivacity which pierces the very marble, his lips parted as if to continue a conversation, offers all the characteristics of a man of letters intelligent and inquisitive. One would take Marcus Aurelius with his bristling hair and beard for a Greek philosopher. Caracalla shows a disordered mind; his glance betrays that fantastic and murderous delirium which seized upon

more than one emperor, especially those who in their youth found themselves exposed to the temptations of absolute power.

Not only do these sculptured monuments make living the great personages of history, they lend the same character of sensible reality to the frame and decoration of the picture, to all the theatre upon which the actors play their role. When I was a college student my masters ignored these facts. No portrait-statue was ever mentioned in the cut and dried epitome placed in our hands, and I question whether I really believed that Sparta and Athens, Rome and Carthage had ever existed. At least I did not know where or how to place them in space. I knew nothing of their situation, of the constructions of their walls, their houses and their temples. They were for me shades, vaguely floating between heaven and earth.

If it is thus in the case of classical antiquity, notwithstanding the colored and brilliant narrations of its writers, how much more difficult is it to comprehend the Middle Ages if studied

only in their literary remains. French was not then the language of the thinkers. The profound thought of the middle ages will not be found among the troubadours; one must look for that to the savans, the philosophers, the theologians and hagiographers; but to follow closely the subtleties of analysis and complexity of symbolism in which that thought delights, requires great effort of mind rendered yet more laborious by the artificial character of an ecclesiastical Latin which no longer renewed itself at the living sources of popular speech.

We are unable to see how such works, whatever may be their value for the learned, are able to play any role in the education of our youth; and recently by a well-judged innovation in our school programmes a considerable place was made for histories and poems in the vernacular, so that the Song of Roland, the names of Villehardouin and of Joinville have been added to our study topics; these the student can only read in translation, or at best in such arrangements as modernize the language. The contact there-

fore between the chronicle and the reader's mind is very imperfect. Supposing a reader capable of deciphering the original text, even then the formless prose and stringed couplets slowly unrolling their assonances would never give him the vivid impression which a page of Tacitus or a canto of Virgil offers to any one who has mastered a little Latin; and then in the writings of the middle ages there are only occasional flashes of true beauty. If the conception has grandeur its expression will be feeble and dragging.

On the contrary a Romanesque and a Gothic church are not less beautiful after their kind than a Greek temple; many minds regard them as superior in grace and in grandeur. In any case they do not accent less clearly the power of the religious faith which has constructed them, and by their majesty, by the height of their dimly illuminated vaultings, by the thousands of figures which people and animate their surfaces they define with singular distinctness the character of this faith. As in Greece the sculptor makes himself a docile and intelligent co-laborer with

the architect, as Phidias and Alcamenes represented in the pediments and friezes of their Doric temples the great god and the local heroes of Athens and Olympia, so also the anonymous masters who decorated our cathedrals set up their statues in the splayings of the doors, along the traceried galleries which flank the façade, on the summits of the pinnacles wherever an unoccupied spot could be found; these statues are distributed in an order prescribed by dogma and tradition, images of the Saviour and of the Virgin, of angels, saints, prophets and apostles, and of personages who flit through the narratives of the Gospels or legends. Many a statue at Bourges, at Chartres, at Rheims, at Amiens and at Notre Dame de Paris are marvels of severe elegance, of chaste and spiritual grace, of moral dignity. It is a recent discovery; but there is hardly a connoisseur who would not admit a comparison between the most vaunted of ancient statues and the admirable "Christ teaching" of the south portal of Amiens Cathedral, the statue which bears the popular name of the "beau

Dieu d'Amiens''. Thus, that which the middle ages could not express in words—the august mysteries of the Christian dogma, the poetry of the Old and New Testaments, the triumph and death of martyrs, the miracles of saints and their infinite charities—all this was sculptured by a firm and broad chisel which neither sought nor avoided difficulties and which was sure of its form whatever material it employed. To comprehend how superior this plastic is to the literary work of the time it needs only to compare the Christ of Amiens with word-portraits of the Son of God as attempted by authors of the Mysteries. “What can be flatter than these poor verses which are nevertheless of the fifteenth century? These authors are betrayed by their imperfect language. The sculptor of the thirteenth century, on the contrary, who fully possessed the grammar of this art, was able to express all he felt, and has left us one of the most divine ideals of Jesus Christ in the world.”

The Italy of the Renaissance must be unintelligible to any who do not take into account

the place which art held in the pre-occupations of not only her practising artists but men in all conditions, princes, nobles, burghers and even people in the most humble circumstances; none among all these who did not feel a passionate love for beauty. In this love Italy lived and of it she died. She died because, giving her whole life-sap to the satisfaction of this passion, she became indifferent to her own dismemberment, to the hard yoke of her tyrants, and to the loss of her political liberty and independence. Her life, absorbed in this intense passion, spent and renewed itself in the very ardor with which she pursued and realized her ideal under all its aspects. Compared with such an infatuation, art for our age is no more than the momentary and idle distraction of the leisure classes; and to those who devote themselves to it, is often only a profession, like any other which one might choose for the chances it offers of gain.

It is well-known how large a place in our (French) classical system of education is given to the history and the writers of the seventeenth

century. Now, neither this history reducing it to a recital of battles and negotiations, nor this literature, rich and varied as it is, are able, by themselves, to account for the position in Europe occupied by Louis XIV, admired, imitated or rather aped by those even who most heartily detested him, and admitted as, par excellence, the type of a modern king. Have we not seen this prestige after the lapse of two centuries still dominating the sick mind of King Louis II of Bavaria? In his desire to copy his chosen model this king utterly ruined himself by building palaces. If on his death bed Louis XIV reproached himself that he had too well loved to build, his edifices with their majestic amplitude and opulence of decoration gave to that royal life a framing which had much to do with the be-dazzlement of Europe in the presence of the *Roi-Soleil*. If one wishes to realize something of the impression this monarch made upon his contemporaries one must visit Versailles, pass from apartment to apartment in the Château, and walk about the terraces and avenues of its

park. To be sure all French high schools are not like Condorcet, close to the Western R. R. station; but everywhere it is possible for the teacher to describe Versailles, and to show by a series of representations pictorial or otherwise, its principal features; he will thus project upon this historical figure a light much brighter than if he required his pupil to memorize all the campaigns of Turenne and of Condé, all the clauses of the treaties of Nimègue and of Ryswick.

It is the same with the eighteenth century; if one knows nothing of its art a very incomplete conception of it is inevitable. This century, to which Voltaire gave the tone, seems to have been lacking in a sense of poetry; everything called by that name, even to André Chénier, is only rhymed prose. Nevertheless imagination did not yield her right, but, like water which changes its bed, she seemed to withdraw from letters and reserved herself for the arts of design. There she gave proof of invention, of free and sportive grace; the architects adopt plans of a happy disposition, affect forms of rare

elegance both in the elements of construction and in the ornaments which decorate it; such sculptors as Caffieri and Houdon give to portraiture a marvellous intensity of life; the terra cottas of Colodion recall the antique modellers; painters like Greuze and Lancret, Nattier and Boucher, make fêtes for the eyes, while Watteau and Fragonard create chimerical paradises of eternal youth and eternal desire. The political history of our kings and ministers during this period is a succession of errors and blunders, of aborted plans and fruitless victories. If France in spite of her reverses still holds a precedence in Europe, it is to her writers and to her artists that she owes it.

We pause to ask ourselves if too much stress has not been laid upon the necessity of pleading the cause of art. It may be said that our cause is already gained in the consent of all the best minds; and in fact, more than one indication points to an awakened interest more keenly felt than ever before; it is especially noticeable in the place assigned this study in higher education by the creation more or less recent, of chairs devoted

to it. In the greater number of our universities however, art history is not yet represented, or if at all is represented very inadequately; still, the principle has obtained a footing and in time results will appear.

In secondary instruction since the timid experimental step of 1891, there has been no forward movement. Only a limited number of pupils have reaped the fruit of the reform, so that since the benefit has not been extended to all the students of our high and collegiate schools, art and its history cannot be said to have conquered their legitimate share of influence and of activity in the collective work of national education. In France the only lines of study which contribute to general culture are those imposed upon the student while in the preparatory school. There is talk of withdrawing the study of philosophy from the high school and moving it forward to the university course. Whether or not this would be a benefit, one thing is certain, whenever this move is made philosophy, like Sanscrit, will be studied only by the curious few.

If it is demonstrated that the mind which is a stranger to all knowledge of art matters is not a mind truly cultivated, the teaching which alone can fill this gap should be established at the high schools and as much in the classical as in the so-called modern division. Without pretending to exact from the pupils as much time as does general history this study should be placed on the same footing with it, should be protected by the same sanctions, should claim for itself its assigned hours, should be presented by instructors who are qualified for their tasks and who have at their disposal proper illustrative material, without which they can only offer their auditors a sterile nomenclature of names and dates.

The hour seems to have arrived to realize this progress; and to insure the success of the reform it will not be enough merely to extend over another series of masters and pupils the scheme adopted in 1891 without modifying its present conditions.

Modifications are much to be desired. The instructors who have been charged with this teach-

ing in the high schools have been impoverished for the new need, they have had no special preparation and they have not been encouraged to acquire it; the time allotted has been inadequate; it is now only one hour per week. Even so the experiment would have some chance of success if the indispensable illustrative and documentary apparatus were supplied. It is as impossible to teach art history without showing its monuments or reproductions of them as to teach geography without the ordinary or the relief maps. A form is defined by its limits or contours; these lines the mind may apprehend only through eye or touch—practically through the eye. To a mind already acquainted with a certain form, words may suffice to recall its image; but if that form has never been perceived, words, however eloquent, are powerless to describe it.

This point has never been comprehended by the school administration. The administration simply directs that from October 1st of each year masters of the modern division shall see to it that the history of art is taught. How can

they? What illustrative aids have they? Because these questions have never been considered, what has happened? On the insistence of the professor, the authorities have granted to certain schools small subsidies, enough to buy a few dozen photographs. Somewhere else a principal, ransacking his drawers, has been able to find a few leavings which he has devoted to these uses.

One school, that of Rheims, has the walls of its great gallery-vestibule entirely covered with engravings, photographs, and mouldings. It is a little museum, in which all the epochs of art may be found represented, as also pieces of the most interesting sculptures of the thirteenth century; these have been borrowed from the neighboring cathedral. It is the sort of material a professor is able to utilize; but no other high school is thus furnished. It happened in Rheims that the headmaster was an archæologist who had employed the leisure of his youth in deciphering the ancient edifices and museums of Roman Gaul; later, condemned to abstain from these personal researches, he undertook to awaken in

the pupils under his care a taste for studies whose charm he had himself proved. Such favoring conditions and opportunities are not the lot of many masters.

In spite of these drawbacks the new course of study, because it responds to a secret desire of cultivated minds, has been well received; in more than one high school of both Paris and the provinces students belonging to the classical division have demanded and studied it with diligence. This movement on their part, without outside pressure or concert, was a sort of indirect protest against the decision which had placed them with regard to their comrades at a disadvantage. It is now proposed to put this new study on a better footing where it already exists, and to introduce it where until now it has been neglected; it only remains to discuss the question of ways and means.

The first matter to regulate is the choice of masters; measures must be adopted which will make teachers equal to their task. It may be best to resort to the traditional expedient of

creating under the title History of Art a special chair, to hold which a competitive examination must be absolved; or, to offer, dependent on a satisfactory examination, a certificate of qualification. Nothing could be easier; candidates will be seen flocking as soon as such a notice is posted. But, have we not too many competitions? There is already difficulty in finding enough judges to serve on the various juries, and it is an embarrassment to provide places of assemblage. Besides, art will long occupy a very restricted place on the curriculum and those who have qualified themselves to teach will find only a few hours of service demanded; further, by reserving the privilege of teaching this branch to holders of diplomas, shall we not deprive ourselves of valuable assistance from other sources?

I would propose that, using for the moment the material at hand, we address ourselves especially to the professors of history. Their attention has already been called to plastic art by references to it, slight as they are, in the official programmes made out for the department of

History; and from the very nature of their function these professors are inclined, if not to read more, to read books of greater variety in subject than their colleagues; they of all teachers will most easily adapt themselves to the new situation.

In the examinations of aspirants to professorships of history, Art history heretofore has played a very secondary part; though the examiners do propose an occasional question. In 1896 of the four subjects assigned for theses, one was "The Great Epochs of Gothic Art in France during the Middle Ages", and the following topics are from lists which have come under my eye: "Egyptian Monuments of the Pharaonic time", list 1892; "Primitive Greece according to the most recent discoveries", 1893; "The Great Monuments of Rome under the Empire", "The Civilization and Art of Ancient Persia", 1894; "The Monuments of the Athenian Acropolis", 1894. Since 1894 no topics of this nature appear on the jury lists, and candidates may well hope that the subject of art will be passed over; but they well *know* that proficiency in political, military, and

diplomatic history will be thoroughly sounded, and, quite naturally, these future professors infer that the great peoples and great centuries of the past may be comprehended without taking into account creations of art. To make our reform effective, questions on the history of art should be included in every historical examination, whether for license, for diploma, for advanced work (degree), or to qualify for filling the chair of history.

Whenever, therefore, this campaign shall open the professors of history will form the bulk of the army; but to this permanent and regular corps auxiliary troops may with profit be added; such volunteers should be enrolled as may present themselves with brilliant records, whose recommendations are not a sudden examination but published works, and often a whole life devoted to the study of art. Of course one may be a fine connoisseur without possessing the gift for teaching. It will pertain to the principals of our educational establishments to discover and to test these occasional assistant professors; and

to engage only those who, in one way or another, shall have proved their capacity to communicate what they know by word of mouth.

Above all things I would desire this instruction to be made compatible with an extreme variety in and a very great liberty of method. It should not everywhere be entrusted to the same category of instructors. Where a member of the school faculty is found specially fitted for it, as in a certain high school of Paris the professor of rhetoric and author of one of the most beautiful books ever written on the history of Christian art, he should be selected to teach it. Again, appeal might be made to former members of the schools of Athens or Rome, to some gifted critic or learned artist (there are such) who might be willing to discuss the theory and history of his art. All the arts of design are so closely bound together that it would be easy for the adept in anyone of them to speak with intelligence and understanding of the others.

I would wish also—and with our passion for uniformity it is asking much—that no attempt

should be made to develop in all the high and collegiate schools of our Republic the full programme in all its parts. It seems to me entirely natural that in our southern cities, at Nîmes for example, the preference should be given to ancient art, while at Chartres, Amiens, and Rheims studies of the cathedral should be made.

I would go even further; I would not require that everywhere the course should have the same duration. Certain hours should be reserved to it in the senior and junior classes of the high school in rhetoric and in philosophy; but the professor should not feel obliged to devote these hours exclusively to art; he should use his judgment and let the time depend upon what he had to offer in point or new. From such a master twenty lessons of superior quality would serve better to awaken in the pupils a sense of art, than forty or fifty from some poor devil who contents himself with repeating phrases borrowed at second hand from a book.

Under penalty of miscarrying and being a mere delusion this experiment should be made

supple, diverse, and always ready to avail itself without pedantry of all aids from which it may expect to derive any benefit; and it must adjust itself to varying conditions of the centre where it is to be developed. The question is to know in what measure our rules and accepted customs will lend themselves to the play of these manifold arrangements and this perpetual improvisation. If our dream is to be realized the principals of our high schools will need to be less dominated than at present by the central authority; they must have a voice in the selection of their staff, and be free to modify according to circumstances the interior government of the school and the order of its studies.

There are certain other embarrassments to provide against. School principals would willingly urge on to success this new instruction, could all its necessities—its teaching corps and illustrative apparatus—be provided for at the same time. The teachers may be found, although a certain liberality of view as well as much perseverance must attend the search, for

they exist both within the ranks of the teaching corps and outside in a latent condition; they need only to be disengaged, brought together and put in motion.

As to the material equipment, that is question of money, a difficulty which the voting of a subsidy will dispose of. With a few thousand francs the nucleus of a fund may be established at every locality concerned; then a slight annual disbursement to each establishment will keep the collection up to date and permit it to increase by degrees. With proper care the cost of repairs would be almost nul, and that care the high school master himself would bestow all the more willingly if in each place the fund to purchase these local collections should be at his independent disposal. In this as in everything let there be liberty. Gaps in collections thus ordered will in time be filled if only through a change of masters. We do not think however that the state should relinquish all control over the funds it provides for this purpose, though its principal rôle should be to furnish to all inquirers infor-

mation, advice and suggestions as to expenditures.

M. Perrot here speaks of the strange lack in France of art manuals and text-books. No such manuals exist as those of Kugler, Lübke, and Ludwig von Sybel, or Carl Schnaase's *History of Art*; and of these only Lübke has been translated into French. In this connection he discusses the doubtful value of the text-book for school uses. In spite of the convenience of having always at hand a book in which one may be sure of finding date and name, catalogue of the principal works of an artist, and a reference list to monographs, there are in the very merit of the work and the confidence one places in it a temptation and a danger; the temptation of accepting ready-made judgments, the danger of habituating oneself to consulting a book rather than the monuments. It is less trouble to glance through a book than to visit a museum, a church, a ruin. Now if there is any kind of instruction which lends itself to vapid repetitions and automatic recitations it is the history of art.

The most profound erudition derived solely from books will never be worth the experience which comes from living in intimate association with the monuments, that wholly personal experience which gives accent to the words of the master or sets in vibration an echo of the very emotion he felt before a noble edifice, a great statue, or a beautiful painting.

The professor of history most anxious to improve himself would never be able to study from the original more than a limited number of works of art; and it is of course not proposed to annex to each high school a gallery of antiques and of the works of modern sculptors and painters. All we ask is that the master should be in a position to place before the eyes of his pupils representations of the originals about which he is informing them, which may be done through photographs, or better by means of the magic lantern.

Lantern slides in series may be had from Germany, if the French will not venture to produce them; and in Germany may also be procured

the architectural wall-charts so indispensable as a complement to photography, the uses of which he thus explains; photography alone is incomplete, *elle sert à tout mais ne suffit à rien*; in painting, photography suppresses color; it deforms the statue, exaggerating its salient parts; it shows architecture only in perspective, giving the true dimensions, height, length, width, neither separately nor collectively in their mutual interdependence. To comprehend these relations a ground plan is the first requisite, to which elevations and sections must be added. A photographic view of the ruins of the Parthenon may be exhibited; without a ground plan indicating the positions once occupied by the columns and walls now overthrown and in ruins, one will gain but a vague conception of the arrangement of a Doric peripteral temple, its three naves, its cellar divided into two unequal halls. The view may be well understood only by studying first the ground plan, then a longitudinal and a transverse section of the restored interior. The same may be said of a Romanesque or a Gothic church.

These examples may indicate the sort of wall charts which should be added to the material equipment of a course on the history of art.

As to the buildings of antiquity this collection should include ground plans of an Egyptian temple, of an Assyrian and of a Persian palace, those of a Greek and a Roman theatre, an amphitheatre such as the Coliseum, baths like those of Caracalla, a dwelling house from Pompeii, etc., etc.—plans which should be accompanied with the probable restorations drawn on a large scale. And the same mode of presentation should be adopted for groups of buildings such as Luxor or Karnac, the terrace of Persepolis, the Acropolis of Athens, the Altis of Olympia, the sacred enclosure of Delphi, the Roman forum, the buildings of the Palatine.

When in 1876 I had the honor of being chosen to initiate the course of Classical Archæology in the Belles Lettres Academy of the Institute of France, I found in a collection edited in Germany some of the wall charts which I have just enumerated; those lacking were furnished to me

in the shape of large drawings in wash by a listener to my first lectures, M. Charles Chipiez, the learned architect who became later my co-laborer. Notwithstanding the school programme of 1891, nothing of value in this kind has been undertaken by any French editor. The essentials of such a collection could easily be brought together, for plates in histories of art may be enlarged at will by a mechanical process; as to restorations, various archæological works might be drawn upon, as well as those to be found in the library of the *Ecole des Beaux Arts*. The day when art history shall be everywhere taught may perhaps see French publishers willing to issue a series of such charts, and every teacher will desire to acquire a copy. If these publishers will not now venture the risk we must place our orders with strangers.

As to casts it would be useless to hope that each high school should be supplied when not even the University of Paris has a complete series placed in chronological order. Satisfactory arrangements may however be made. One

teacher may borrow from another in rotation. Where a cast is too weighty to be moved, masters and pupils must go, as did the prophet, to the mountain which would not come to him. At the town museum may be seen not only casts but paintings, and before these works of art the master will give his best instruction. These visits to the museums should be recommended on the official programme and their dates should be indicated on all study plans. One or two afternoons of each month should be reserved for these art promenades.

An outline follows of what the favored lads of the Parisian high schools may enjoy in this kind; they will have afternoons at the Louvre, they will see the museums of the Luxemburg and Trocadero, the cabinet of prints and medals at the National Library, the collections at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, and that charming *cours du Mârier* which will give them a foretaste of Italy; such edifices too as Notre Dame and the Sainte Chapelle, the basilica of St. Denis, and the château of Versailles. There are few French

cities even of the second or third rank which have not much food for such study.

One thing more M. Perrot would desire to find in this ideal master of the future—a knowledge of drawing sufficient to enable him, while speaking, to trace with the chalk the outline of a ground plan, the section of a nave or the profile of a moulding on the blackboard. Nothing awakens and holds attention in a listener like sketches executed under his eye, which agreeably interrupt the always somewhat monotonous course of a continuous lecture from the chair.

M. Perrot next treats of the same embarrassment in French schools which is felt here; a crowding of subjects, a danger that the pupil will find no time for thought, for assimilating his mental food, for origination; that he will play the role of passive auditor whose only duty is to listen and take abundant notes. He sees however ways of meeting this objection. First, the monthly or semi-monthly art-promenades, being an integral part of the course, would not

increase but would rather relieve the strain of routine work. These promenades however would be worthless except as complementing instruction from the chair, to which an hour and a half per week should be devoted. Second, only advanced classes of the high school should be allowed to take this study; younger children are not mature enough to comprehend it. On the other hand students preparing for college entrance examinations who are specially hard pressed at the end of the school year might restrict the art history course to the fall term; the master could thus count with more security on attention and assiduity; and some of the corresponding art-promenades might be deferred until later in the year, when they would be a distraction from the harrassing pre-occupations of the diploma, relaxing both mind and limbs.

This would not entirely dispose of the difficulty—that seeming impossibility of adding during six months of the year yet another subject to the overcrowded curriculum. But M. Perrot has another happy suggestion. He appeals again

to the professors of history. Could they not make some abridgments in the memorizing they require? Could they not glide more rapidly over certain facts of secondary importance? Recalling his student days he counts time lost which he spent in memorizing boundaries of the domains which the sons of Clovis inherited at his death, and the names and dates of many battles in the campaigns of Frederick II and Napoleon. By such abridgments perhaps a place might be made for lessons devoted to art, whether in the form of a special series or with their historical setting—a part of the great picture of the past.

The reasons given by M. Perrot for such an abridgment, in favor of art history, of the high school course in philosophy are still more cogent and worthy of attention. I do not undertake, he says, to criticise this teaching, but I have often heard expressions of regret from men who cannot be suspected either of not understanding or not loving philosophy. They regret the place given, at the expense of psychology, logic, and morality to questions which they regard as un-

solvable. More than one master, they say, thus leads young people to employ glibly terms, the meaning of which has not been and cannot be nicely defined, because these terms do not represent clear ideas. Bad habitudes result, the mind accustoms itself to believe that it comprehends what it does comprehend in any true sense of the word; it intoxicates itself on abstractions, and plays with formulas which it mistakes for solutions—those hollow formulas which leave behind them only uncertainties and desolation. Nothing leads more surely to a skepticism dangerous to morality than these simple affirmations of a precocious and rash dogmatism.

Taine was struck with this peril. The outline papers of the high school course on philosophy were put into his hands by a student in whom he took a warm interest. He found in them many theories, many discussions which seemed to him beyond the capacity of reasoning faculties at seventeen and eighteen. Far from gaining in vigor by the effort, these faculties are thus fatigued and led astray. These tendencies are

most apparent among candidates for admission into the normal school and for the degree of master of arts. Professors are dragged into metaphysical speculations by the very ardor of curiosity which these open-hearted young people feel when for the first time they find themselves facing the great problems which will always torment humanity. The course in philosophy could well be curtailed and thus contribute some hours to the count of art history.

M. Pérrot is an authority so respected and the conditions in France, as above represented, are in many respects so nearly on a parallel with those in our own country, that these suggestions and recommendations must carry weight and be especially welcomed by all who, in the interests of our schools, are sincerely trying to establish a just proportion in the relative value of studies.



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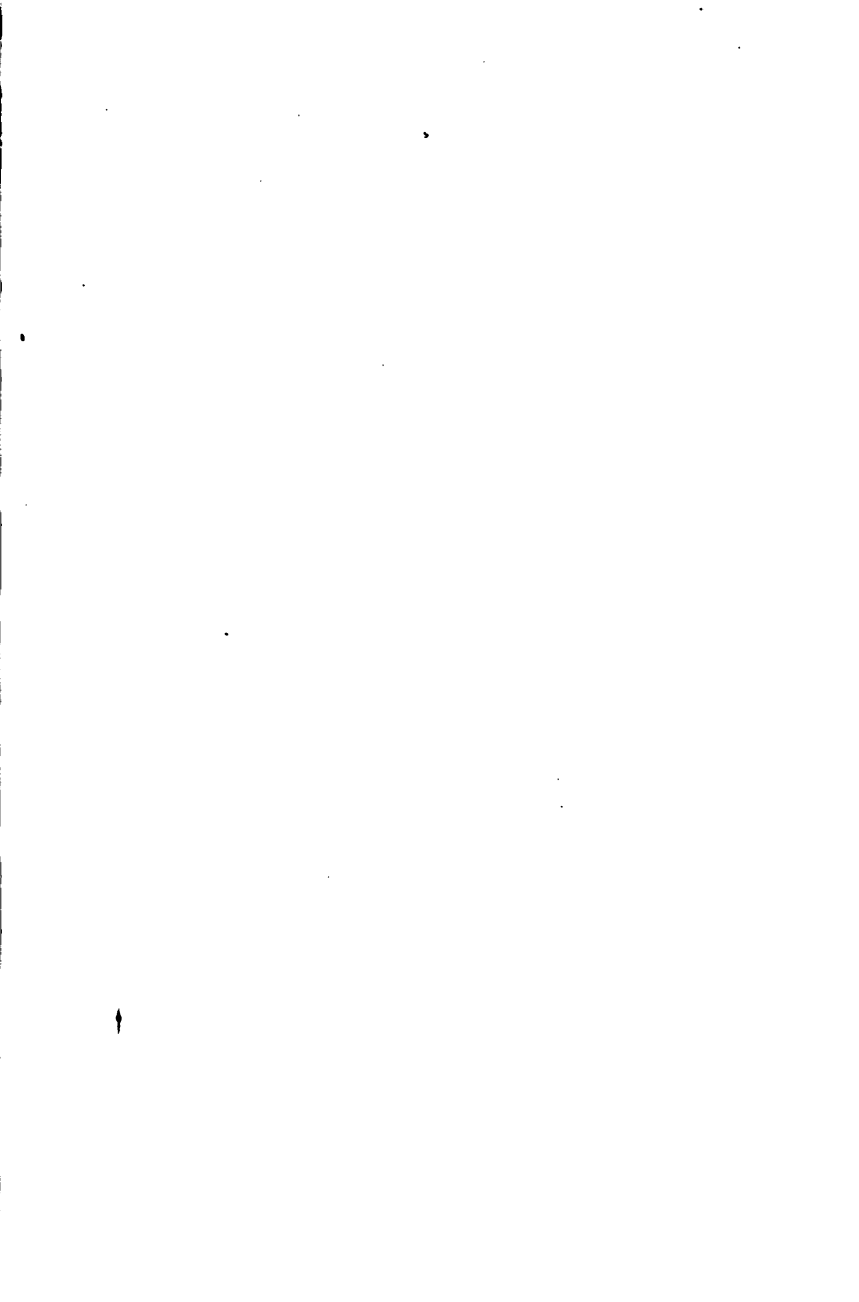
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